

Have You Gotten Recharged Lately?

Introduction

Computer printers, like computers, are here to stay. The millions of printers in use also generate millions of spent toner and ink-jet cartridges.

But now there's an alternative to throwing out spent cartridges: recharging them with new toner or ink. Manufacturers can rebuild toner cartridges with new drums and other essential parts after users run a specified number of copies. You can also purchase refilled ink-jet cartridges or self-refill kits. Purchasing these re-manufactured cartridges saves money and is good for the environment.

Re-manufactured Cartridges Save You Money

Purchasing re-manufactured cartridges will generally cost you less than purchasing new "virgin" cartridges. These savings add up over time, but you can save money sooner by purchasing in large quantities.

Recycling and buying re-manufacturing cartridges also saves on disposal costs because you are throwing less away.

"Buying Recycled-Content Products Makes Cents"

Quality Products

The toner cartridge re-manufacturing industry has made many improvements in their products. Re-manufactured cartridges have been available for many years, although early re-manufactured technology was sometimes questionable and could result in leakage and poor image quality. Today, however, a quality re-manufactured cartridge will meet Original Equipment Manufacture (OEM) standards. All popular brands of cartridges can be re-manufactured.

Most re-manufactured cartridges are of good quality, with very low failure rates. Good suppliers

also provide quick service to exchange defective cartridges.

Save Landfill Space

Millions of plastic non-degradable cartridges are potentially destined for landfills. But when you recycle the used ones and buy re-manufactured cartridges, you eliminate waste and save landfill space and tipping fee costs.

"Recycling Includes Buying Recycled-Content Products"

Where Can You Buy Them?

Re-manufactured cartridges are generally available through your local office supplier and through specialty dealers. They are a very important office supply item. Many retailers offer a pickup service for old cartridges when delivering newly re-manufactured cartridges. Some manufacturers will even cover the cost of shipping the spent cartridges back to the factory. You can also find cartridges at: www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP/.

Are They Reportable?

State of California entities are required to report any recycled-content purchases made in 11 categories of recyclable materials. Re-manufactured toner cartridges are reportable under the plastic products (PL) category for the State Agency Buy Recycled Campaign (SABRC) of the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB). Re-manufactured cartridges are an example of reuse, and they count toward your SABRC annual purchase requirements.



Who's Using Re-manufactured Cartridges?

Many State of California agencies are currently using re-manufactured toner cartridges in their operations, with good results. Local and federal government offices, as well as those in the private and nonprofit sectors, benefit from using re-manufactured cartridges.

Here's what State organizations have to say about cartridge and supplier performance:

Department of Water Resources, Management Services Branch, Sacramento, CA—Gary Bergeron

Gary gets very good performance out of both recharged ink-jet and toner cartridges for three very important reasons: 1) He practices good preventive maintenance on any printer before installing a cartridge. 2) Before using any re-manufactured cartridge, Gary will try one cartridge on a "guinea pig" printer to test its performance. If the cartridge meets Gary's strict OEM performance requirements, he will consider purchasing more. 3) Most importantly, Gary has established a good business relationship with a reliable supplier who offers a quality product.

The above provides a good benchmark for anyone wanting to establish reliable procedures in obtaining quality re-manufactured toner cartridges and ink-jet cartridges.

Department of Health Services (DHS), Program Support Branch, Sacramento, CA—Sandy Henderson

The DHS Program Support Branch has been using re-manufactured toner cartridges since 1993 with few problems. The re-manufactured toner cartridges are reliable, and when a problem arises, the supplier is quick to replace the cartridge.

California Integrated Waste Management Board, Information Management Branch, Sacramento, CA—Lynelle Belardi

The Information Management Branch has been purchasing re-manufactured toner cartridges for the CWIMB for the last four to five years. Although they have experienced some problems with past suppliers, their current supplier has provided a quality product with low failure rates and minimal problems. Cost differences between new and re-manufactured cartridges vary depending on model, but generally, re-manufactured cartridges cost less.

The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy costs, Flex Your Power and visit www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html.

***"Preserve a Planet—
Buy Recycled Products"***

